Mean Length of Utterance in Portuguese children with cochlear implant: differences with hearing pairs?

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Abstract

This study is part of a longitudinal project about language acquisition (Ref. PTDC/LIN/111889/2009) in which we systematically recorded the acquisition and development of language in ten deaf, hearing and bilingual children with similar socioeconomic status. For this purpose, spontaneous speech samples are being collected and audio recorded once a month, over a period of two years. Subsequently, an orthographic transcription using ELAN (EUDICO Linguistic Annotator) was made for oral language acquisition, in favour of annotation, analysis and documentation.

In the current study, language development as measured by Mean Length of Utterance in words (MLUw) will be used. MLUw is a reliable measure of a child's structural development and is calculated dividing the total number of words by the number of utterances.

This paper aims to determine if there are differences between the values of MLU in words (MLU-w) in two deaf implanted children paired with two hearing children with the same age, gender and parental education. Additionally, MLU-w values will be analysed between the two cochlear implanted children sharing similar characteristics: gender, chronological age, age implantation, longer cochlear implant use and parental education.

Our data seem to draw the hypothesis that there were differences in MLU-w values between cochlear implanted children and matched hearing children (Geers et al., 2009) and also large variations in language skills among cochlear implanted children (Inscoe et al., 2009) (almost one word per utterance in MLU-w values) even when sharing similar characteristics.

References

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